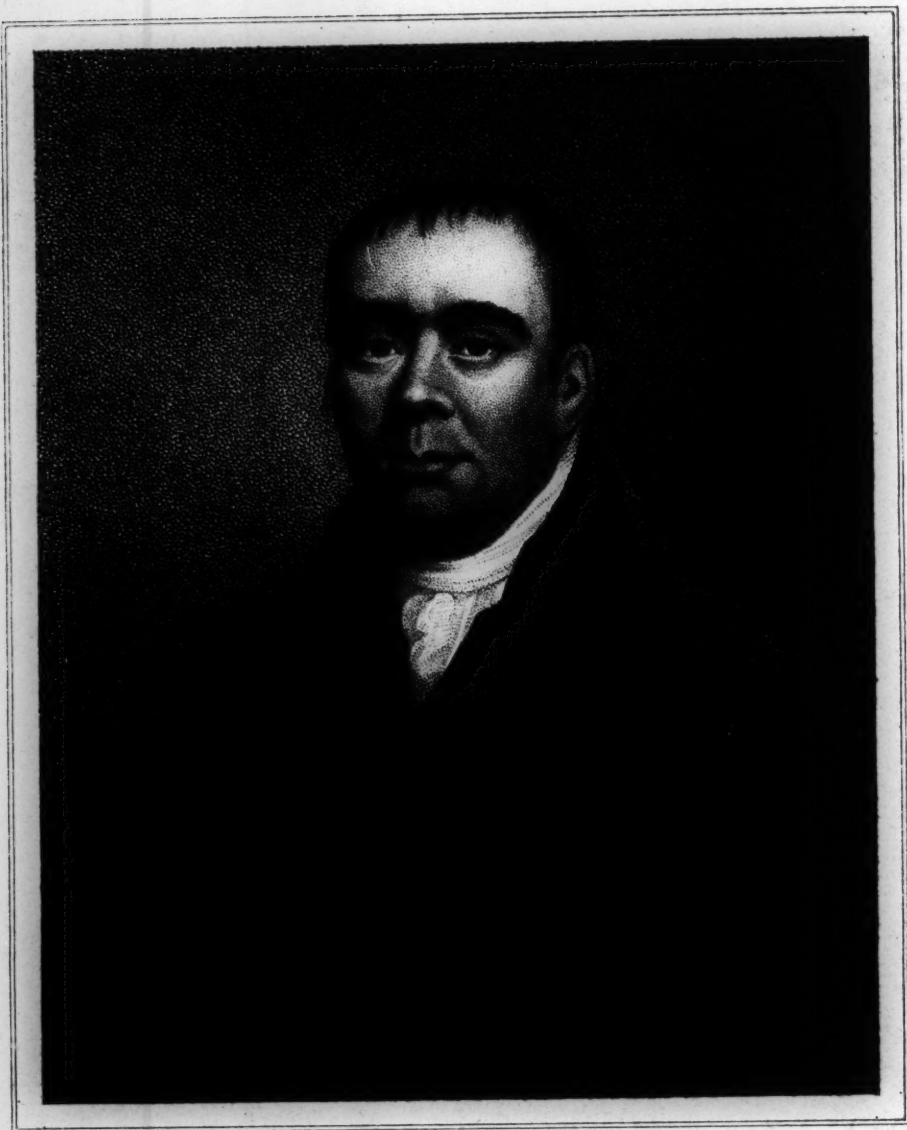
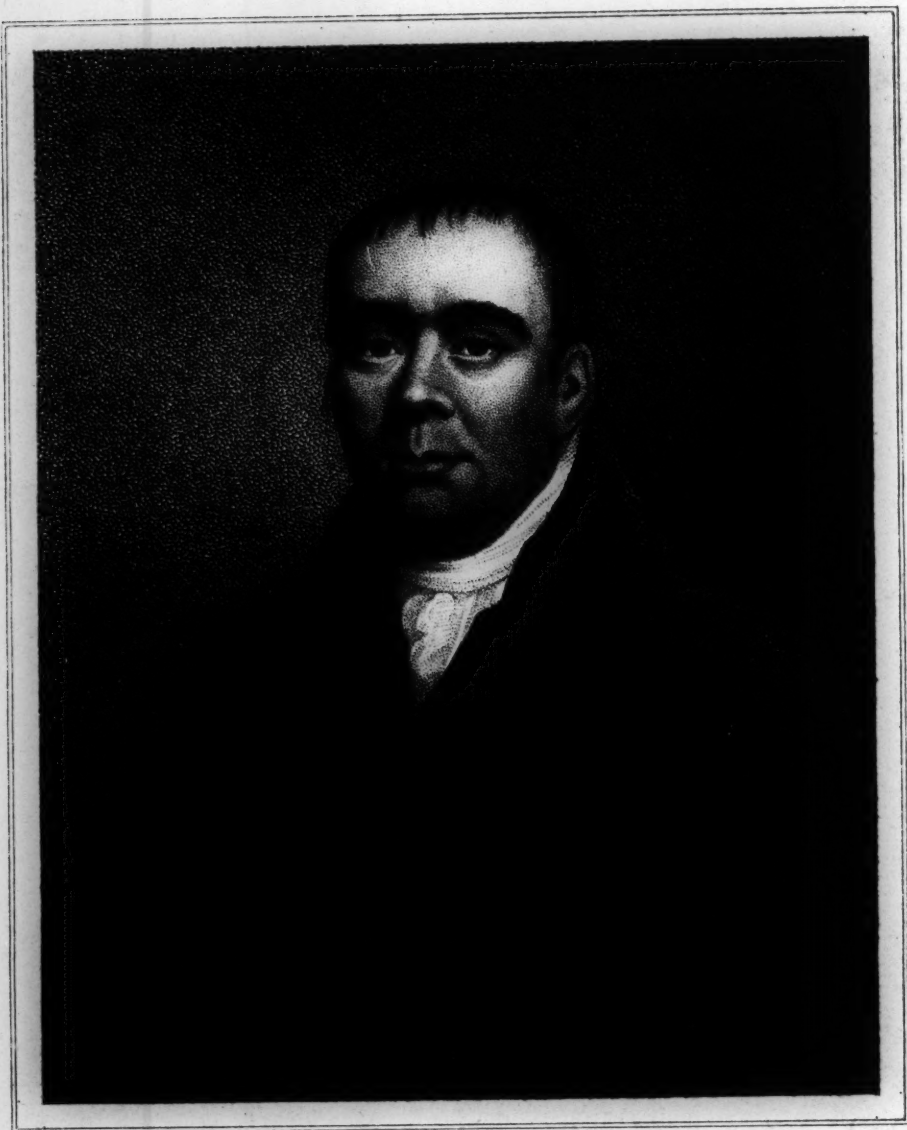




REV^D ANDREW FULLER.

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R E M A R K S

ON

Mr. *Martin's* PUBLICATION,

ENTITLED

“ THOUGHTS on the DUTY of MAN,
relative to FAITH in JESUS CHRIST.”

In FIVE LETTERS to a FRIEND.

LETTER I. Mr. MARTIN's Accusations considered.

II. General Observations.

III. On Love to God for his own Excellency.

IV. On Divine Efficiency.

V. On Human Endeavour.

By ANDREW FULLER.

*Our want of POWER (to trust in Christ) is, generally
speaking, want of WILL, and want of LOVE.*

Mr. MARTIN—Ser. on Rom. x. 3. p. 31.

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M.DCC.LXXXIX.





R E M A R K S

O N

Mr. MARTIN's PUBLICATION, &c.

LETTER FIRST.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU have requested my thoughts on Mr. *Martin's* late performance. I now take up my pen to comply with your request. I cannot help observing, that the *spirit* in which Mr. M. has conducted his performance, renders a sober and serious reply to it very difficult. His abounding likewise so much with what respects my personal qualities as a writer, and as a christian, must render a minute attention to what he has written, equally difficult. There is this comfort, however, that such things do not require an answer. Nobody expects that I should go about to defend my own abilities for writing, or the spirit in which I have written; the impartial reader, perhaps, may be a better judge of both, than either Mr. M. or myself.

All I shall attempt, will be, to notice a few of Mr. M.'s *accusations*, make some *general observations* on his performance, and discuss two or three of the *leading subjects in debate*.

Most writers propose to establish some system, or hypothesis in the place of that which they go about to demolish; but whatever Mr. M. may do in future, I think it must be obvious to every reader, that he has

done but little in this way at present. The main points that he seems to have kept in view, are to inform the world that there is such a person as a "Mr. Andrew Fuller, of Kettering, in Northamptonshire—that he is a very *obscure, inconsistent, erraneous, ignorant, artful, vain, hypocritical* kind of a writer—that he has written upon *humility*, but is far from being humble—that he was under the influence of a lust of being consequential"—that when he professes a respect for many of those who differ from him, and a grief of mind for the shyness which he apprehended his publication might occasion, he is not to be believed; for the whole was only his *vanity* or *covetousness*, which produced an anxious fear common to "poor authors, lest their works should not be read, should not *sell*, or should not be *applauded*"—that he is wanting in method—that his style is embarrassed, coarse, comical, and uncouth—that he is unqualified to instruct—and that those who cannot discern these defects and blemishes in his writings, are ignorant, and incompetent to discover even the mistakes which his *Errata* were given to correct.—That Mr. M. on the contrary, "has had the advantage of trials and observations, more in number and variety than some people have had opportunities to experience and consider"—that "he fancied himself qualified to say something in answer to Mr. Fuller that should be above contempt—that he hoped to gain some *repute* by it—but that supposing he should not, yet it must be acknowledged, he thinks, even by his opponent, that he is *above contempt*."—Now suppose all this were true, what do nine parts out of ten of it concern the reader? The question with which he is supposed to take a book in hand, is, *What is truth?* but should this be the case with Mr. M.'s reader, must he not at least, wait the publication of a *second part* for an answer?

Mr. M. as if he thought scorn to lay hands on a single obscure individual, ventures to extend his attack far and wide. Messieurs EVANS of Bristol, HALL of Arnsby, SPENCER of Alcester, and THOMAS of Leominster,

Leominster,* and indeed the whole *Midland Association*, are attacked amongst the *living*: and amongst the *dead*, not only PRESIDENT EDWARDS, but all those *Calvinists* who have pleaded for a love to God and divine things for their own excellency, fall under his severe rebuke. (160.) Well, I am happy in my company. There is no need in this case that I should become the advocate of either the dead or the living; the writings of neither, I should hope, will be much endangered by Mr. M.'s attack.

I need not say that Mr. M. deals plentifully in *accusations*. Besides those already mentioned, I am accused of *speaking loosely of the scriptures*—and *diminutively of the obligations of men*—of aiming to be wise above what is written—of attempting to equalize the obligations of all mankind, whose capacities and opportunities God hath so variously distributed—of undervaluing an assurance of interest in Christ—and of importing my sentiments from *America*.—These, with many other lesser charges, Mr. M. has exhibited, repeating on almost every occasion, as a kind of chorus to the song, those of *OBSCURITY*, *INCONSISTENCY*, and *ERROR*. A long train of accusations indeed! Are they founded in justice? Let us examine—

Because I suppose there are *some truths* which would be evident, even to the mind of a heathen, were he but the subject of a right spirit; I am accused of *speaking loosely of the scriptures*. (42.) This censure, however, falls equally upon the apostle Paul as upon me. Rom. i. 19, 20.

Farther, Because I speak of God's requirements, as being *in themselves easy* to be complied with, as having nothing hard or difficult in them but what arises from the depravity of our hearts; I am accused of diminishing the obligations of men, by representing it "as not being any great difficulty to perform the full extent of duty." (52, 53.) This censure likewise falls upon *Moses*, *Samuel*, and *Jeremiah*, as well as upon me. These

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each

* The *one* you know wrote the circular letter, which Mr. M. has censured, p. 71. and the *other* signed it as moderator, and has since defended it.

each spake of God's service in exactly the same kind of language as I have done, and with which Mr. M. is so much offended. Deut. x. 12. 1 Sam. xii. 24. Jer. iii. 13.

I am accused likewise of *aiming to be wiser above what is imparted.* (132.) To imagine that we ought to be wiser above what is imparted *in the scripture*, is the height of folly and presumption: attempts of this kind were severely censured by *Agur, Moses, and John*, in the passages quoted by Mr. M. But if it is no man's duty to be wiser but in proportion as wisdom is actually and effectually imparted to him by the Holy Spirit, then it is no man's duty to be wiser than he is. And if so, there could be no reason in that complaint, *O that they were wiser!* Indeed, this is the main tendency of a great part of Mr. M.'s reasonings: if they prove any thing, they prove that no man is obliged to be more wiser, more holy, or more spiritual than he actually is; and that is the same thing as proving that there is no such thing as sin in the world.

Much is said concerning *equal obligation*, as covering what I have written with obscurity; even the word *man*, in the connection I have used it, is said to be obscure. (13.) All obligation which creatures can be under, I have all along supposed to be, *in proportion to their natural abilities and opportunities.* A child of ten years old is not supposed to be capable of understanding so much as when he becomes a man of thirty; nor is a man obliged to believe faster or sooner than he has the means of obtaining evidence: but both the child and the man are obliged to be of such a disposition, as shall cordially embrace the gospel when it is revealed, and its meaning comes within the reach of their understandings. All this was declared in my Reply to Mr. TAYLOR, p. 5. which had Mr. M. considered, it might have spared him the trouble (or should I have said, deprived him of the happiness? for so he accounts it, p. 190) of writing at least about twenty pages of his performance.*

But

* Especially pages 13--15, 20, 21, 30--38, 44--46.

But if I talk of *understanding* what we believe, I shall be charged with adopting Mr. *Foster's* maxim, "Where mystery begins, religion ends." If by understanding were meant a perfect comprehension of *all that pertains to a doctrine*, the charge were just; but surely I must understand the meaning of the testifier before I can either believe or disbelieve his testimony; except it be in a *general way*, taking it for granted from the opinion I have of his veracity, that whatever he says is true. I can believe no *particular* scripture-doctrine without perceiving that that doctrine is contained in scripture; and such perception is the same thing as understanding the meaning of the testifier. This is no more than Mr. M. himself elsewhere pleads for; (143, 182) so that his opposition to it here, looks like contention for contention's sake.

Again, I am accused of undervaluing an *assurance* of a personal interest in Christ; because I suppose, that, when compared with the heart's falling in with God's way of salvation, and when *that* is so attended to as that *this* is overlooked, it is a *mean* and *low* idea of faith. (134.) That may be good and desirable in its place, which yet if put in the place of some other thing of greater excellence, becomes mean and low. There is nothing mean or low in a man's pursuing his own *interest* in subordination to the public good; or his own *reputation* in suberviency to God's glory; but to make either the *direct* and *ultimate* end of his pursuits, is *mean* and *low*, and unworthy of a rational being.

Much is said of my having read EDWARDS, BEL-LAMY, and other *American* writers. Mr. M. seems as if he would have his reader think he has made a great discovery here; though it is no more than I had freely acknowledged. It is true I have received instruction in reading the authors above mentioned; nor do I know of any sin or shame, either in the thing itself, or in openly acknowledging it. Mr. M. may wish to insinuate that I have taken matters upon trust from these writers, without examining them; but in answer to such insinuation it is sufficient to say, that is more than he can prove. All he knows, or can know of the matter, is, that I have read

read them, and approve of some of their sentiments; and is there any crime in this? I remember about fourteen years ago, to have received some advantage on the subject now in debate, by hearing Mr. MARTIN preach upon it. It is true we were so unhappy *then* as well as now, as to differ in our sentiments. I, at that time did NOT think as I now do; but Mr. *Martin* DID. I own I disliked the violence with which he then maintained my present sentiments; and the supercilious language which he used of those who differed from him, who I then understood to be GILL and BRINE, or writers of their stamp. Upon the whole, however, what he said set me a thinking, and I believe was of use to me. I remember also soon after this time to have read Mr. M.'s sermon on Rom. x. 3. entitled, *The Rock of Offence the Sinners last and only Refuge*. This sermon, which ascribes men's non-submission to the righteousness of God to *voluntary ignorance, prejudice, pride and self-righteousness*, appeared to me to carry in it considerable evidence in favour of those principles, concerning the truth of which I then hesitated. And has not Mr. M. derived instruction from the works of men, as well as his neighbours? If he has not, it is not much to his honour. Be that as it may, he cannot mean to censure the reading of *all* human productions, for if so, why does he offer *his own* to the public? If somebody were not to *go to market*, Mr. M. might be in a similar predicament with other "poor authors, agitated lest his performance should not *SELL*."—After all, perhaps it is not *going to market* that Mr. M. objects to, either in himself or others, but going to an *American* market; for there are several authors whom he still recommends. Mr. M. whatever is the reason, seems to have an antipathy against *America*, in religion as well as in politics. There was a time, however, when the writings of EDWARDS had the honour of his warmest recommendation; when he accounted his treatise on *Religious Affections* "a much *wanted*, and for that reason perhaps, a much *neglected* book." END and EVID. of ADOPTION, p. 19. But *time and chance happen to all things*—*There is a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.*

Finally,

Finally, I am accused of *obscurity*, *inconsistency*, and *error*. As to *obscurity*, I shall say nothing, except it be, that every one does not think so, nor every one of my opponents; Mr. TAYLOR allows me to have written with “*perspicuity*.” As to *inconsistency*, If what Mr. M. says is true, which doubtless it is, that “the most consistent character is only a little *less inconsistent* than his neighbours,” it must be in vain for me wholly to deny the charge. Thus much, however, I may say, that the far greater part of what Mr. M. charges with inconsistency, is such in sound only, and not in sense; and that if he had not almost perpetually *confounded* things that differ, he could not have found so many *apparent* inconsistencies as he has. No doubt you have observed how he confounds *divine efficiency* with human obligation; (15.) what *is*, with what *ought to be*; (44.) men’s obligation perfectly to conform to God’s law, with an obligation to make reconciliation for sin; (62.) their *natural* capacity to keep the law perfectly *in future*, that is, to love God with all their heart; with their capacity to produce such a righteousness as the law requires, which must imply a making atonement for past sins; (104, 144.) *reason* for keeping the law, with *encouragement* to comply with the gospel; (108, 110.) the *formal* requirement of obedience, with *that* in the divine character and conduct which affords a reason for such requirement being made; (40.) and that which warrants our *coming to* Christ, with that which warrants us to conclude ourselves interested in eternal life; (72--76.)—It is on these subjects principally that I am charged with inconsistency. It is allowed there are many opposite things asserted; but opposites may be asserted, surely, of *things that differ*, without affording ground for a charge of inconsistency.* As to the charge of *error*, that will come under consideration when I attempt a discussion of the leading subjects in debate.

I am, Your’s, affectionately,

A. F.

LETTER

* After all that Mr. MARTIN has written upon my *inconsistency*, is it not rather surprizing he should maintain that “our want of *power* (to

LETTER SECOND.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING replied to Mr. M.'s principal *accusations*, I shall now make a few *general observations* on his performance. I know not how it is, but it is a fact I have sometimes observed, that where a person is more than ordinarily addicted to certain vices, it is common for him to be the first that shall discover those vices in his neighbours. I knew a man, that every body around him reckoned to be very *proud*; and yet he was always exclaiming against *pride* in others. There is some resemblance between this temper of mind, and a certain distemper of the body, which makes every object around us appear of the same colour as that with which the eye is infected. Whether this will not account for some of Mr. M.'s charges, particularly for those of *obscurity*, *inconsistency*, and *error*, I leave you to judge from the whole of his performance, especially from what will be noticed in the following observations.

I think it must appear to every attentive reader, that Mr. M. has hitherto done but little towards overturning my *leading propositions*, even though these were what in his *title-page*, he proposed to consider. As to the first, he neither denies that whatever God commands is the duty of those to whom it is commanded, nor attempts to invalidate the evidence in favour of faith being com-
manded

(to trust in Christ) is, generally speaking, want of *will*, and want of *love*;—that the reasons or causes of the righteousness of Christ being rejected, are *voluntary ignorance*, prejudice, pride, &c. and when he has done, find fault with me for maintaining the self-same things? Do compare his *Rock of Offence*, &c. p. 31, 36--48. with his *Thoughts on Duty*, p. 103, 104, 142.—Should it be said, it is seventeen or eighteen years ago since that sermon was printed, and Mr. M. may have altered his sentiments in that time, I answer, true, but if this should acquit him of present *inconsistency*, it must be at the expence of his *integrity*. If his sentiments are altered, why did he not honestly acknowledge it, and answer his *own* arguments, instead of falling foul upon those of another, which were expressed in nearly the self-same words? It looks as if Mr. M. strove to conceal his own change of sentiments, that he might enjoy the *happiness* of a few strokes at his AUTHOR for his fickleness in changing his,

manded of God to unregenerate sinners. As to the *second*, he has said something about it; (32.) he has tried his utmost to make it an *identical* proposition, but cannot gain his point; conscious, it seems, that it would not bear such a construction, he allows in the next page, (33) that I "*must* be understood otherwise."*—All that he has said in answer to it in its *true meaning*, is, that it enjoins *equal obligation* upon all; but this charge has been already answered in the foregoing letter. The *third* proposition he has likewise glanced at, and says I make the gospel, though not in *form*, yet in *fact*, a law. (40.) If you look at my treatise, p. 57, you will see the injustice of this remark. The *fourth*, *fifth*, and *sixth* propositions he hath scarcely touched; and the *scriptures* under each, are never looked in the face.

It is rather extraordinary, that of so many publications against an *eighteen-penny pamphlet*, they should all steer so wide of the body of scripture evidence, contained in the *second part*. Mr. BURTON, to do him justice, has said *more* in a way of reply to this part than any of his coadjutors. It is to be hoped Mr. M. will not publish *two* more two shilling books, and at last omit executing what in his *title-page* he has given us to expect.

There was an argument which I had urged pretty much, in treatise, 78, and reply to Mr. BURTON, 34. It was this, Every man ought to be Christ's *friend*, or his *enemy*, or to stand neuter, and be *neither*. To suppose the *first* is to grant that all is pleaded for; to suppose the *second* is too gross to need a refutation; if then neither of these will satisfy, it must fall upon the *third*, but this our Lord declares to be an *impossibility*, *He that is not with me, is against me*.—It might have tended to bring the matter

* Suppose it had been an *identical proposition*, what then? Why then I must have suffered shame for my *ignorance*—True, but my sufferings might have been a little alleviated by Mr. M.'s condescending to become my companion and fellow-sufferer. "Are not all men *anxious to possess*, he asks, what they *covet to enjoy*?" (28.) Undoubtedly! and when he shall have informed us of the difference between a being *anxious to possess*, and *coveting to enjoy*, we may perceive the tendency of this "*fact*", if it have such a tendency, to refute my inferences."

matter to some issue, if Mr. M. would but have given this argument a fair discussion. He seems to have glanced at it, however, in one place. "Perhaps, he" says, Mr. Fuller does not sufficiently recollect that in "human actions, *what seems to be the reverse of doing wrong, is not always doing what is right.*" There are cases, he supposes, wherein the reverse of doing wrong, may be as much of an extreme as the doing wrong itself; and instances in cases of "*avarice and prodigality,*" &c. &c. (144.) True, there are cases in which both extremes may be equally wrong; but the question is, is it so in respect of being Christ's *friend* or his *enemy*; of a perfect future conformity to God's law, or a living in the *breach* of it? Mr. M. to make this observation of any force, must admit, that it would be equally an extreme for a sinner to be decidedly *for* Christ, as it is to be decidedly *against* him; that it were equally wrong to love God with *all* the heart, as not to love him *at all*;—That his duty is to be of a *divided* heart, to be neither *for* Christ, nor *against* him, but in a medium way, just as it is a man's duty to be neither covetous nor prodigal, but something between them.—"Perhaps Mr. Fuller has considered,"* that though there are cases in which both extremes are wrong, yet it is not so in this case; in *this case* our Lord declares a medium to be impossible.

I have taken it for granted, that, *so far as any thing is charged upon men as their sin, so far the contrary must be their duty*; because where there is no obligation, there can be no transgression.†—I should not have imagined that any man in his senses could have called this in question; and yet this is what Mr. M. has done. He calls it a *mere inference*, and talks of proving it a *false consequence*! (89.) In page 146, he speaks of men being given up to *wile* affections—allows such affections to be *sinful*; and yet will not allow it to be their duty to possess the contrary! What he has advanced, (89, 90) to

* See my reply, preface, p. iv. note.

† *The contrary must be their duty*?—What, then, Mr. M. will ask, is prodigality the duty of the covetous? I answer, no; neither is prodigality, but contentment and generosity, the contrary of covetousness. Heb. xiii. 5.

to prove this “ a false consequence,” amounts to this, that finners *cannot* serve the Lord acceptably—and that whatever good *takes place, it is the effect of divine influence.* This is the reasoning that is to prove that *though men are criminal for breaking the law, yet they are not obliged perfectly to keep it—that though unbelief is a sin, yet faith is not a duty!* On what principles, and in what manner is such a writer to be reasoned with?

“ Figurative expressions, Mr. M. contends, are intended to convey a meaning;” (126.) Undoubtedly, and sometimes as *strong*, and *stronger* a meaning than terms used literally. Mr. M. had no right to represent as if by pleading for a figurative sense of the terms *blind*, *deaf*, and *dead*, I meant to lessen their force. The term *quicken*ed has doubtless a meaning, and a very strong one; and if Mr. M. had not thought himself warranted, while he censures his AUTHOR as he calls him, for *coarseness* and *uncouthness* of style, to be as coarse, as uncouth, as comical, and as irreverent as he pleased, himself, he could never have talked of being RUBBED UP by the Spirit of God.

Mr. M. frequently writes as if his only end was to *oppose*. Sometimes I am accused of *equalizing* the obligations of men, whose capacities are various; (13) at other times for *varying* their obligations according to their natural capacity or incapacity. (104.) When I make it men’s duty to possess that, in respect of holy dispositions, of which they are destitute; then he will have it that their duty is only to *occupy what they have*. (18.) On the other hand, when I admit, in respect of natural capacities and opportunities, that men are obliged only to *occupy what they have*, then he complains that this is putting the Almighty off with only a right *use* of what is left. (98, 104.) Thus he falls out with Mr. HALL, of *Arncliffe*, for asserting, that “ God doth not require more of any man than a right use of what he hath”—alleging, that, “ if so, it must *inevitably* follow, that no man need seek for what he has not. (76.) Some people would have thought that rightly to *use* or

occupy what we have, would *be* to seek that which we have not. If the *slothful servant* had rightly used his talent, he would have *increased* it, by seeking that which he had not. If Mr. M.'s "modes of opposition are not more *formidable*, than this conclusion is *inevitable*," we have not much to fear.—After all, what does he mean? what is he about? Has he any sentiment upon the subject? Or does he mean barely to *oppose*? If he has, it must be this, that *natural impossibilities* ARE binding upon mankind, but that *moral impossibilities* ARE NOT SO!

Whether Mr. M. has not intermeddled in a controversy, which, with all his "opportunities" for obtaining knowledge, *he does not understand*, some have doubted. What his abilities are for writing, perhaps does not become me to say, nor is it of any great consequence to determine; but I should think it is no great recommendation of his judgment in learning, to call that *dictatorial*, which any reader may perceive to be written merely in the *declaratory* style; (66.) such as every writer must use, unless he will be always repeating the words, *I conceive, I apprehend, &c.*—It is not language, however, that I chiefly refer to, but *sentiment*. Nothing is more common than for Mr. M. to be employed in zealously establishing what I never denied, and refusing what I never affirmed. This is the case almost all through his piece when he treats on *divine efficiency*, and the duty of men, as he expresses it, to "possess the power of God," and *perform acts peculiar to him*. There are not places wanting wherein I am expressly acquitted, on the above subject, of that of which in other places I am accused. Compare p. 96, with p. 125. In the one, it is supposed that I extend duty to "those actions which are not *our own*; or to the possession of *the power of God*;" in the other it is acknowledged that I "am of opinion, that *spiritual blessings*, and the *divine energy* that gives us the enjoyment of them, CANNOT come under the notion of duties." Is it uncandid to impute the above to his *not understanding* the subject on which he writes?—On *natural and moral ability and inability*, Mr. M. writes in

a manner that is very extraordinary. Of *moral* ability, he talks of men being enabled to make a right *use* of it; (118.) as if I supposed it to be a kind of talent, which may be *used* or *abused*. Of *natural* ability, he asks, "Does it require *ability* to reject Christ? let this be proved." (59.) As if it required *proof* that a man must possess the powers of *intelligence* and *choice*, in order to reject Christ! If not, a *stock*, or a *stone* might reject him as well as a man.—On all occasions he denies *natural inability* to be any excuse for the non-performance of that which would otherwise be duty. (101, 122.) He seems astonished at my supposing the contrary in cases where the parties have brought that inability upon themselves by their own sin. (104.) It seems by this, as if Mr. M. would criminate the errors of a *lunatic*, provided he has lost his reason by his own personal fault: yea, suppose he has not, his "natural defects and disorders are the continued *consequences* of our first revolt from God," and therefore, it seems are inexcusable! (98.) Some people, however, will be ready to think a man cannot be far off such a state of mind himself, before he can admit of such an idea. After all, Does not Mr. M.'s own description of the case of *Sampson*, (29) who lost his strength by his *own sin*, sufficiently refute what he would here establish?

Mr. M. has greatly abounded in *misrepresentation*. To enumerate every instance of it, were as tedious as it is unnecessary. There are but few pages which are wholly exempt. If, as he assures us, it is none of it to be imputed to *unfair intention*, but to a *bad judgment*, (152.) his judgment must be *bad* indeed! * Much is made of what I said in my Treatise, of "no sort of

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hope

* Query—Does not Mr. M. by his here distinguishing between *judgment* and *intention*, mean to excuse himself from blame, at least in some degree, in case of any supposed misrepresentation? But if natural inability has no tendency to excuse, (101.) he might as well have been willing to have it imputed to *unfair intention*, as to a *bad judgment*. The truth is, though Mr. M. may treat this subject with scorn, may call it a *little distinction*, may assume an air of importance, and affect great superiority in knowledge; (69.) yet it is a distinction founded in the nature of things; and Mr. M. and every other man, whether

hope being held out to sinners as such." (72, 73.) I have long since as good as acknowledged that sentence to be *obscure*; and have declared my meaning to be, "merely to disown that any sinner was encouraged by the gospel to hope for eternal life, without returning home to God by Jesus Christ." Rep. to Mr. TAYLOR, p. 3.—But of this Mr. M. has taken no notice. This might be an oversight. But to what can you impute his applying what was written upon *humility* in the abstract, to my *own* humility? Farther, what can you make of his representing me as imputing it to *ignorance, pride, dishonesty of heart, and aversion to God*, that people do not believe as *I believe*—that is, that they do not embrace my views of the sentiment here in dispute. (133.) Is this "the result of *fair intention*?" Should it be said, Mr. M. meant to urge the above only as an *inference*, and that he has so represented it in another place; (142.) Be it so, he had no warrant to represent that inference as *my apprehension*, which he does, p. 113. But suppose it were considered as an *inference*, what then? If *mental errors* are not excusable, as Mr. M. says they are not, (101.) then to what purpose are all his attempts to excuse them? (132, 143, 182.) If mental errors are criminal in others, why should they be thought innocent in Mr. M. or me? I never professed to be free from *prejudice*, though I am persuaded it is no more than I *ought to be*; and in proportion as this occupies the mind, we shall linger and halt in embracing truth. Our Lord, who was never wanting in *compassion* to his disciples, yet said, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.*

I will mention but one instance more of Mr. M.'s misrepresentations.

whether he will or no, must feel its propriety, and by whatever language he may chuse to express it, must use it in ten thousand instances in life.

As to the swelling language of page 69, and indeed almost all through his piece, few people except himself will think that of advantage to his cause.—"The ignorant and the insolent," as Mr. M. elsewhere observes, "in matters of a religious nature, as well as in what relates to the circle of science, always make a more *pompous* profession of their knowledge and zeal, than those who are wise and humble." *End and Evid. of Adoption*, p. 5.

misrepresentation. I had said, "Some have treated the distinction of inability into natural and moral, as a *new invention*; but that only proves their own want of reading." Treatise, 191. Also, that "for want of knowing better, some people had suspected this distinction to be friendly to Arminianism?" 192. Mr. M. after observing that I charge my Calvinistic opponents with *want of reading*, with *want of knowing better*, &c. adds, "When the characters who are censured, on the one side, and the reading, knowledge, and years of their formidable CENSOR, on the other, are duly considered, will such a contrast give the intelligent reader a high idea of our author's modesty?" (91.) But does Mr. M. know *what* CHARACTERS these are? If not, how can either he or his reader "consider" any thing about them? Will Mr. M. assert there can be *no* persons found on *his* side of the question in debate, of whom he himself would be ashamed to say, that they are persons of extensive reading? While yet there are others who disagree with me in this point, who would be ashamed to defend their cause by the rash assertions and misrepresentations which some have advanced. Is it any compliment to Calvinists, and Calvinists of *character* too, to suppose *them* so ignorant as to treat the above distinction as a *new invention*? Is Mr. M. one of these Calvinists? If he is, it would be no want of modesty to tell him that his reading must either have been very small, or to very little purpose. One should think it must imply a greater want of modesty to *deny* than to *affirm* that if the above distinction is supposed to be friendly to Arminianism, it must be *for want of knowing better*; seeing three of the greatest champions that ever engaged in the Arminian controversy, have either used it, or declared in its favour. EDWARDS is well known to have used it, and that to purpose, in his *Enquiry into the Freedom of the Will*; TOPLADY applauded Edwards's work, as adapted "totally to unravel and defeat the Arminian sophistry;" and GILL, though he made but little use of it, yet declared, that "the distinction of the *natural* and *moral* liberty of the will was of great service in the Arminian controversy."

—Query, Did not Mr. M. in the above remark wish to have his reader think, that I referred to such CHARACTERS as GILL and BRINE; (whose names he mentions within a page or two of the place) and spake of THEM as men of little reading, and little knowledge? Why else did he print the word CHARACTERS in capitals? and why omit referring as usual, to the page where my words are to be found? If this was the case, and this after all, was the result of fair intention; I say again it must indicate a judgment *bad* indeed!

Mr. M. takes one method to work upon his readers, not much to his *own* honour, or to the credit of the opinion he has of *their* judgment; that is, of calling himself and those of his opinion "*Calvinists, intelligent Calvinists,*" (88.) and insinuating that his opponent is at least approaching towards "*Baxterianism.*" (151.) It were puerile to have any dispute with him upon such a subject. "Competent judges" will perceive that I am as far off from *Baxterianism*, as he is from *Calvinism*; and I need not be farther.

Mr. M. asks, "Does Mr. Fuller know an intelligent "*Calvinist* that is offended with the character of God—that believes that God is not worthy of being loved with all the heart, soul, mind and strength—that is so ignorant as not to perceive, that want of love to God is so *wile* a disposition, as admits of no excuse?" (88.) —Perhaps not; but he knows of one who *calls* himself a *Calvinist*, and in point of intelligence, thinks himself pretty much *above contempt*, who has written above two hundred pages to prove (if they are intended to prove any thing) that the *possession* of love to God is not incumbent on men in general, but barely an *endeavour* to possess it; and if so, how is it that the want of it should admit of no *excuse*? Is it so inexcusable a fault to be *wanting* in what we are not obliged to *have*?

Of the anger or resentment of *others*, Mr. M. seems to have no dread. (71.) Heroic man! He seems, however, to consider his *own* anger as very dreadful, and when roused, very unruleable; (93.) he did wisely, and generously,

generously, no doubt, in avoiding a topic by which he might have set himself on fire.

There are many extraordinary features discernable in the face of Mr. M.'s performance, but none more prominent than his *desire of applause*. It is amusing, as well as astonishing, to see the frankness with which this is proclaimed, and even defended. *Self-applause* is his declared motive for loving and praising virtuous actions; (169.) *Reputation* is an end for which he writes. (190.) The "*applause of competent judges*" seems to be the summit of his wishes; (207.) HUME, REID, and TOPLADY, wrote for FAME; and so does Mr. MARTIN, and if he may be believed, every other writer. (170.) All this is *amusing*; but when the authority of PAUL is introduced to justify his folly, this is *profane*. Paul exhorted us to pursue things *which are of good report*; but not *for the sake of gaining applause by it*. The desire of applause is so mean a vice, that most other authors, if they have felt it, have chosen to conceal it; but Mr. M. is superior to concealment. Conscious, it seems, that he is under its governing influence in all he writes, he scorns either to hide it, or apologize for it; he dares to avow it, and defend it, as not only lawful but laudable, and according with apostolic injunction!

And yet, is it not rather extraordinary, that Mr. M. should defend this motive in *himself*, and at the same time censure it so severely in others, calling it by way of disdain, "*the lust of being consequential?*" (180.) It may be alledged, perhaps, that the word *lust* signifies an *inordinate* desire; and Mr. M. may think his desire of fame to be more *moderate* than that of some people. But of this, it may be replied, Mr. M. may be hardly a competent judge. It is not impossible that he may view both his own desires, and those of his neighbours, through a *deceitful medium*, by which the latter may be magnified, and the former diminished. Some have thought it was not very prudent in him to hazard the following questions — "Who are the *most* anxious to secure (and sometimes by methods deservedly censured) the shadow of popularity?"

"larity? Who are *most* desirous of being *thought* very "useful, and *fond* of being CONSEQUENTIAL?" (58.) They will be ready to answer, *Who* indeed? *Who* is it that pleads for *fame* as the object of every undertaking? who that labours to obtain *reputation* by degrading others? who that swells with such an idea of HIMSELF, as to pronounce his qualifications to be *above contempt*, his arguments *formidable*, his conclusions *inevitable*, and those that oppose him to be guilty of such folly as, if it were possible, would make angels blush? *

The pursuit of *fame* is Mr. M.'s avowed object; he would be thought, however, to have steered clear of *envy*. (71.) And yet he speaks as if he was not a little *unhappy* at hearing "last January of the prevalence of Mr. Fuller's sentiments." (190.) But might not this arise from his regard to what he accounted truth? It might; and if such a regard had not been too *disinterested* for

* There was a time when Mr. M. *spiritualized a watch*; a time also when the ministers with whom he was *then* connected, employed him to write a *Circular Letter* to the churches; and a time when he used occasionally to print *sermons*. There was a time also when, in advertizing a *new* performance, he thought proper to cry down these *old* ones, calling them "fugitive pieces, written, as he in his great humility informs the world, at a time when it was his *duty* to have learned, and his *vanity* to publish." See the advertisement at the end of Mr. M.'s *Christian's peculiar Conflict*.

Whatever right Mr. M. might have to cry down his *other* productions, one should have thought he might have let the *Circular Letter* alone. As it is always customary for the associated ministers and messengers to revise, alter, and correct it, and the moderator to sign it, the *writer* can have at most but a *part* of the honour or dishonour attending it; and most writers would, in such an instance, have forborn their claim. If, however, they had put it down amongst their *works*, they would never have thought themselves at liberty to *traduce* it; knowing this could not be done without *insulting* the whole association. But it seems Mr. M. had much rather insult his former connections, than lose an opportunity of praising his *last* performances, and giving the world to understand that he was now become the accomplished author. What a method was this to recommend his book! "Poor authors, as Mr. M. *feelingly* † no doubt, expresses it, (189.) often as *proud*, or *vain* at least, as they "are poor; to what measures are they frequently reduced! The "book will not be *read*, will not *SELL*."—Ah, Mr. MARTIN! Is this your kindness to your old friends? Verily ministers had need beware of giving their sanction to your performances!

† "None but an author, knows an author's cares."—COWPER.

for his theological creed, we might suppose that to be his meaning. Allow this, however, to be his meaning; allow his heart in one instance to be better than his system; this is not all—He talks of being my COMPETITOR; (208.) *Competitor*—for what? for *fame*, no doubt. Happy man, if he can steer his course clear of *Envy*! But with his *motives*, excepting so far as he has openly discovered them, I have no concern. *To his own master he standeth, or falleth.*

I am respectfully your's,

A. F.

LETTER

LETTER THIRD.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING replied to Mr. M.'s accusations, and made some general observations on his performance, I shall now drop some few remarks on *three* of the principal subjects in debate; namely, *love to God, divine efficiency, and human endeavour.* — *Love to God, and divine things* FOR THEIR OWN EXCELLENCY, will be the subject of the present letter. On this subject Mr. M. has dealt largely in *misrepresentation.*

First, He all along supposes, that by loving God for what he is *in himself*, I mean a loving him for some *abstract* properties of his nature, no way *related* to his creatures, and in which they have no *interest*; (158--160, 163.) whereas I have said that "I know of no such properties in the Deity; but that whatever excellency exists in the nature of God, that excellency *is* engaged in favour of his people." (Treatise, p. 98, 102.) But does it follow, that because, if I am a christian, there is no excellency in God but what I *have* an interest in, therefore such interest is the only possible *consideration* for which I can or ought to love him?—It is true in one sense, that I know not what God is *in himself*; nor even what "a blade of grass is;" neither do I know what a *man* is in himself;—but yet I can distinguish between the affection I bear to a man on account of his kindness to me, and that which I feel towards him on account of his general character. A man of infamous character may in some instance do me a kindness: if I am the subject of a right temper, I shall at once feel gratitude and good will towards him, while yet I am constrained to detest his general disposition and conduct. A man of *good* character may do me a kindness: if I feel towards him as I ought, I shall love him both for his kindness to me, and as well for the excellence of his character in general, which might have been what it is, if I had never existed.

Secondly,

Secondly, What Mr. M. has written, supposes that I am against people's *loving themselves*—that I want to *separate* the glory of God, and our best interests—and to make it incumbent on men to pursue the one, so as to neglect the other. (160, 172, 173.) But all this is unjust, and what he could never infer from any thing I have written. I never imagined that all kind of self-love was *selfish*, in the bad sense of the word. On the contrary, I suppose that law which requires us to love our neighbour *as ourselves*, implies that we ought to love ourselves *as our neighbour*; we ought to love *both*, in *subserviency* to his glory, who requires the *supreme* place in our affections. But does it follow, because it is right to make our own interest a *secondary* object of our pursuit, or to seek it in *subserviency* to God's glory, that therefore it must be the *direct* object of all our affections? (160.) Does it follow that because a pursuit of God's glory cannot be *separated* from our best interest, therefore it cannot be *distinguished* from it? Is nothing to be distinguished that cannot be separated? If I pursue a line of conduct tending to promote the public good; and if it appear to others that the public good is the grand end I have in view, I shall *have* reputation; but if it be alledged that because a pursuit of the public good is *attended* with reputation, therefore I must needs have such reputation in view as the *direct* object of my pursuit, in all my actions: would this be just reasoning? Would it be just to say that on account of such reputation *attending* my conduct, it is impossible I should feel any *disinterested* regard to the public good—that is, any regard but that which I feel towards it on account either of the share I, as an individual have in it, or the honour or advantage that will accrue to me from my conduct?

When I speak of loving God *for himself*, I neither suppose it is on account of some excellencies in his nature, which have no *relation* to our welfare; nor that we feel, or ought to feel regardless of our best interests, true honour, or substantial happiness. Each of these may, and ought, no doubt, to be pursued in subordination to God's glory; and a proper pursuit of them,
instead

instead of setting aside the idea of love to God for his own excellency, necessarily *implies* it. Am I, for instance, in search of *true honour*? If I am, it is of that honour that ariseth from being *approved of God*; but in order to God's approbation being the summit of my soul's ambition, I must necessarily love him for what he is *in himself*. What gratification would the applause of a person afford me of whom I had but a mean opinion, and towards whom I had no *previous regard*? Again, Am I in pursuit of *substantial happiness*? If I am, I am in search of the enjoyment of God, as my everlasting portion; but how could I conceive of God as a portion worthy to be sought, or at all adapted to make me happy, unless I loved him for what he is in himself antecedently to my enjoyment of him? Do men ever seek a portion in earthly things without viewing that portion as good and desirable *in itself*, whether they have it or not?

Mr. M. considers a love to God and divine things for their own excellency as a *chimera*; and the ground on which he goes seems to be this, Whatever object we love, the enjoyment of that object affords us *pleasure*, or *happiness*; and so our love is in no respect *disinterested*, does not terminate on what God is *in himself*, but aims "DIRECTLY at our own advantage." (171, 160.) This is the argument that is to silence *Deists*. (171.) This I suppose, is the sum of what Mr. M. would wish to have considered as the result of "trials and observations, more in number and variety, than some people have yet had opportunities to experience and consider." (80.) And what is it after all? The question is, *Is it possible for us to take pleasure in an object for its own sake?* Mr. M. answers, No.—Wherefore? Because that object affords us *pleasure*.—That is, we cannot take pleasure in an object, because we *can and do find pleasure in it!*

What can be thought of Mr. M.'s *ingenuousness* in quoting Mr. BOYLE (167) against the doctrine of disinterested love, when every one who reads his performance must see that *that doctrine* is there expressly and largely defended?

defended? It is true Mr. BOYLE pleads for God's blessings being "*taken in among* the motives of loving him;" and who objects to this? Mr. M. knows his opponent does not. Mr. Boyle pleads that God is to be loved partly "for WHAT HE IS IN HIMSELF," and partly "for WHAT HE IS TO US." (These are his own words.) And I have done the same. But Mr. M. seems to wish to insinuate to the reader that I embrace the same principles with those preachers in the time of Mr. Boyle, who "taught the people that to hope for heaven is a *mercenary, legal, and therefore unfilial affection.*" Is this "the result of fair intention?"—See Mr. BOYLE'S Motives and Incentives to the Love of God, sect. 13.

The gospel undoubtedly holds up *rewards* to stimulate us to duty, rewards addressed to our *emulation*, and *thirst of happiness*; (173.) and if the Deists on this account reproach it as a *selfish theory*, I have no doubt but their reproach is groundless. The gospel ought not to be denominated a selfish theory, because it inculcates a regard to ourselves. If, however, it could be proved that we are there taught *so* to pursue our own interest as that the glory of God shall not be regarded as a supreme, but as a *subordinate* end, the charge were *just*. But the rewards contained in the gospel convey no such idea as this, for the following plain reason.—The sum of all these rewards is GOD HIMSELF. Grace and glory are only God's communications of himself. Hence it follows that such *rewards*, properly pursued, instead of excluding supreme love to God for what he is in himself, necessarily *imply* it. Without such a love, as hath been already observed, it is impossible in any right manner to seek either his approbation or blessing.

Mr. M. himself, it seems, once thought on this subject as his opponent now thinks.* (80.) I wonder whether he then held all the extravagancies which he now imputes to me, and whether we are to consider him as exemplifying the character which he has drawn from Mr. Baxter,

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"censuring

* See also his *End and Evidence of Adoption*, p. 18--23, and 39.

" censuring others by the measure of his own mistakes." (192.) Did he then " suppose it possible for any man to perceive the highest excellence, so as to prefer it, and enjoy it, and yet fancy that such affection might be separated from his *best* interest, and *highest* pleasure?" (160.) Did he then think he had *found out God*, and *known the Almighty to perfection*? or that he had any other ideas of God than by *analogy* or *similitude*? Did he then " swell with a vain imagination," and aspire at *independency* of God? In a word, DID HE THEN THINK HIMSELF A WISER MAN THAN HE DOES NOW?

Mr. M. not only denies the possibility of a love to God for what he is in himself, but likewise a love to *virtue*, and *virtuous actions* for their own sake. He contends, it is with a view to the *interest* that we have in loving and applauding such actions that we love and applaud them. To the objection, how we come to " praise virtuous actions performed in distant ages, and remote countries, which have no connection with our present happiness or security"—Mr. M. answers, " We never cordially bestow praise without being *pleased*. Nor are we pleased with the report of virtuous actions unless we *judge* them to be such. Nor do we *so* judge without *applauding* ourselves for our decision. For we really think it contributes to advance our ' present happiness and security,' by increasing our *reputation*." (196.) Much to the same purpose is what is advanced in p. 138. in a supposed address to me. This account of the matter, it must be allowed, is very curious. We *praise* virtuous actions—wherefore? because those actions *please* us. But wherefore do they please us? because they correspond with what we *judge* to be truly virtuous. But wherefore do we *judge in favour* of true virtue? Because when the decision is past it affords, upon reflection, a ground of *self-applause*. Self-applause therefore is the original motive or reason why we love and applaud virtuous actions!—Mr. M. by making self-applause his motive, must mean either the *thing itself*, or the *desire* of it. If he mean the *self*, he must maintain, that self-applause,

applause, which *arises from* a favourable judgment of virtuous actions, nevertheless existed *before* such judgment was made, so as to be the ground and reason of it. It is something of so peculiar a quality as to exist prior to its cause, and give being to that of which itself is the effect! If he mean the *second*, that is, the *desire* of self-applause, and not the *thing itself*, this, it is possible, may be found to be as far off from the truth as the other. A christian takes up his bible—reads the interesting history of *Joseph*—reads of his patience under sufferings, his chastity in temptations, his firmness, his meekness, his wisdom, his fidelity, his filial duty, but above all his amiable forgiving spirit towards his cruel brethren—His heart begins to burn—with what? *love*? no, stay—first with the desire of self-applause; and knowing that if he judge in favour of Joseph's virtue, is *pleased* with it, and speaks in praise of it, his desire will be accomplished; he consequently forms the decision, feels pleased, proclaims that pleasure to others, and so accomplishes his end; enjoys the satisfaction of self-applause, increases his *reputation*, and thus promotes his present happiness and security!

I will not deny, but that in some cases and in some degree, Mr. M.'s doctrine may be true. *Hypocrites* will often praise what they never practice; and consequently what they never cordially love. Thus the Pharisees *built the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous*. In these cases *self-love* may be the origin, and *reputation* the end; and in this sort it is granted men may applaud really virtuous actions without possessing “religious dispositions.” (168.) But perhaps Mr. M. would not thank me for this concession.

But Mr. M. seems to think he has loaded the doctrine of disinterested love with sufficient reproach by representing “*Arminians, Mysticks, and Deists*, as its chief detailers and defenders.” (80.) But suppose it were so, that would not prove it to be erroneous. Mr. M. however, will not say of either GOODWIN, OWEN, CHARNOCK, EDWARDS, GILL, or BRINE, that they were

"Arminians, Mysticks, or Deists;" and yet they have each defended a love to God and divine things for their own excellency, in distinction from a love to them barely on account of their being advantageous to us.* They admitted that we should love *ourselves*, and pursue our own interest in subserviency to God's glory; but to make our own interest the *first* motive, or the *last* end, was what in their opinion characterized a *hypocrite*, or an *apostate world*. Mr. CHARNOCK calls the one, a "loving of God *first*, and ourselves *in order to God*; the other, a loving of *ourselves* first, and God *in order to ourselves*;" and thus, says he, "LOVE TO GOD IS LOST, AND LOVE TO SELF HATH USURPED THE THRONE."

It may be presumed too, that neither of these writers had less *opportunity* for obtaining knowledge, or were possessed of less *humility*, than Mr. M.; though he ascribes his ideas on this subject to his superior "opportunities to some people," and the ideas of those who differ from him to a spirit of *pride*, the pride of aspiring at independency of God! Nor were they perhaps inferior to him in *wisdom* and *solid judgment*; though he is pleased to represent those who hold this sentiment as "swelling with a vain imagination," and their opinion as *folly* and *madness*, yea, such folly as is sufficient, if it were possible, to make *angels blush*!" (158, 160.) This is the writer that censures his opponent, and talks of his anger being roused, for his *want of respect* for those who differ from him. (93.) Whether *angels can blush*, may be doubted; perhaps, as Mr. M. seems to think, they are *incapable* of it; and does it not seem as if *some men* were equally incapable!

I am affectionately your's,

A. F.

LETTER

* Goodwin on Ephes. vol. I. p. 152--161. Owen on the Spirit, p. 99. Charnock's works, vol. I. p. 90--93. Edwards on Affections, p. 139--192. Gill's Bod. Div. vol. III. ch. 9. Brine's Dialogue, 313--315.

LETTER FOURTH.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING considered what Mr. M. has advanced on *love to God*, the next subject that requires discussion is *DIVINE EFFICIENCY*. I am sorry I should have again to complain of *misrepresentation*. Though Mr. M. acquits me in one place, (124) as indeed he ought, of making any thing the duty of men but that wherein they are voluntary;* yet in many other places he represents me as maintaining that it is men's duty to *produce spiritual dispositions*, (147.) to *be born again*, (150.) to *vivify themselves*, to *make the word effectual* to salvation, (202.) to *convince themselves of sin*, (120.) to *be the sons of God*, (125.) &c. &c. I suppose, however, that all he would abide by, is, that these are the just consequences of my principles; but suppose they were, Mr. M. had no right to represent me as *holding* those consequences, especially when he knows, and in some places acknowledges, that I disavow them.

It was before asked, DO WE NEED THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO ENABLE US TO DO OUR DUTY? Mr. M. answers, "WE DO;" (116.) but denies the inferences that I have drawn from it. The grand inference that I drew from it, was this, *If we need the Spirit of God to enable us to do our duty, then our needing the Spirit of God to enable us to BELIEVE will not prove but that BELIEVING MAY BE A DUTY.*—Now, admitting the premises, what has Mr. M. said to overthrow this conclusion? He says, "Let also this question be well weighed, *Do we need the Spirit of God ONLY to enable us to do our duty?* Are there not *blessings* to be enjoyed, as well as *duties* to be discharged? Blessings, which he who came to bless us designed to be our strength? Blessings by which he turns us from our iniquities, and prepares us for the present and future enjoyment of HIMSELF? Blessings, which, though they are the source and spring

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* See my Treatise, p. 111.

“ of *new obedience*, must not be degraded by the name
 “ of *duty*. For though the proper discharge of duty is
 “ *our excellence*, is it not confined to *our acts*? Blessing
 “ however, is not our excellence, but as it is imparted
 “ and enjoyed, it is *THAT* which makes us to excel.
 “ Why are things so different and so distinct to be con-
 “ founded?” (117.)

Mr. M. I observe, amidst all his exclamations against
obscurity, chuses to deal in very *vague* language. He
 talks of *blessings* bestowed by the Holy Spirit—blessings
 which are the spring of new obedience, but which must
 not be degraded by the name of duty—blessing which
 is not our excellence, but *THAT* which makes us to
 excel—and yet after all, he has not told us *what this*
blessing is; whether it is the *regenerating grace* of the
 Holy Spirit, that is, *divine influence itself*; or whether
 it is a *new heart*, or *new spirit*, wrought by that in-
 fluence. One should think he cannot mean the former,
 for *that* he knows and acknowledges I never imagined to
 be any other than a blessing. (125.) And yet it is evident
 in some places that this is his meaning; particularly in
 p. 96, where he makes that which I suppose is required
 of men to be a “ *possessing of the power of God!*” By
blessing he must mean, if he mean any thing different
 from his opponent, a *new heart*, *spirit*, or *disposition*;
 and since he sometimes distinguishes “ *spiritual blessings*,
 from the *energy* that gives us the enjoyment of them;”
 (125.) and in the above passage confines all duty to *our*
acts, thereby denying it to extend to *dispositions*; one
 should think he means to affirm, that though mental
acts may be duties, yet *dispositions* are not, but are *mere*
blessings; and that these are *not our excellence*, but what
cause us to excel. To all which it is replied,

I. Suppose all duty *were* confined to *our acts*, Mr. M.
 I presume, will not deny that believing in Christ is an
act of the mind; and therefore according to his own
 reasoning, it may be the duty of men in general, though
 like other duty it cannot be done without the Spirit of
 God. How then does he overthrow my inference? Has
 he

he not inadvertently confirmed it? Admitting that we need the Holy Spirit for *other* purposes as well as to enable us to do our duty—(indeed this is what I should never deny.) Yea admitting for argument's sake, the *whole* of what he has here alledged to be just, believing in Christ may notwithstanding be a duty; a duty which we need the Holy Spirit to enable us to comply with, and which, therefore, in being a duty, is no way inconsistent with the doctrine of *divine efficiency*. If Mr. M.'s reasonings affect any thing, it is not the duty of believing in Christ, but that of being the subjects of *spiritual dispositions*; and so of the *same thing* in different respects, being *both* a duty and a blessing. How far this is affected remains to be examined.

II. Duty is *not* to be confined to *our acts*; it extends to our *dispositions*.—God requires that we BE HOLY, *for that he is holy*—that *the SAME MIND BE IN US which was in Christ Jesus*—that we BE PERFECT, as our Father who is in heaven is perfect.—If holy dispositions do not come under the denomination of *duties*, neither do unholy dispositions come under the denomination of *sins*; for where there is no obligation there can be no transgression—and so it will follow that a *proud, covetous, or malignant temper of mind*, has nothing in it offensive to God, or worthy of his displeasure. Mr. M. would not be thought “so ignorant as not to perceive that the “want of love to God is a DISPOSITION SO VILE as to “admit of no excuse.” (88.) But if duty be confined to *our acts*, how can *vileness* be attributed to any disposition. In that case, it can be neither virtuous nor vicious.

III. If duty extend to the *temper, spirit, or disposition* of the mind, then it must follow that *the same thing may in different respects, be both a duty and a blessing*.—It is admitted on all hands, that holy dispositions, wherever they exist, are *blessings*; and if they come within the compass of duty, then they must be both duties and blessings. Every sinner is required to *love God with all his heart*. This implies a right spirit. A right spirit in
this

this view is *duty*. But if any sinner *now possesses* such a spirit, it is in consequence of that promise, *A new heart will I give them, and a new spirit will I put within them.* A right spirit in this view is a *blessing*.

Nobody imagines that blessing, considered *as such*, is our excellence; doubtless it is *that*, as Mr. M. says, "which makes us to excel." But if the same thing in one respect may be a duty, as well as in another respect a blessing, then it may *in one respect* be our excellence, after all. And is not this the very truth? Is not the *temper, spirit, or disposition* of the mind, either its *excellence*, or its *disgrace*? Is not that *new heart*, and *new spirit*, which is on all hands allowed to be a *blessing* of the Holy Spirit, our *excellence* as well as our *happiness*? Instead of making no part of our excellence, it makes the sum of it; for no *acts* are any farther excellent, or virtuous, than as they are the expressions of such a disposition.

When I speak of the same thing, in different respects, being both a duty and a blessing, Mr. M. calls it *balwing* the matter. (131.) But this I should think will contribute but little to his "*reputation amongst competent judges.*" Is it *balwing* of any thing to consider it differently in different respects? For example, is it *balwing* or *dividing* the Deity, to say that in different respects he is both *three* and *one*?

What Mr. M. has said against its being the duty of a bad man to be a good man; and against its being the duty of every good man to be as holy as St. Paul, he may well think will be "considered by some as erroneous and dangerous." (96.) I should not exceed truth were I to say, those who have hitherto been Mr. M.'s best friends, *detest* these principles; and in proportion as our Lord's doctrine, which requires us to be *perfect*, even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect, is regarded, they must always be detested. If this is not *Antinomianism*, nothing ever deserved that name. There was a time when Mr. M. himself considered such notions as not only
" dangerous,

“ *dangerous, but despicable.*” End and Evid. of Adop.
P. 46, 47.

It is a poor apology that he makes for himself, that he “ only means to shew that saying it is the duty of a bad man to MAKE HIMSELF a good man; and that it is the duty of a good man to MAKE HIMSELF the best man, is language of a dangerous tendency.” (95.) Whether it is the duty of men to *make themselves* good men, or not, is not the question; such language, or such ideas never proceeded from my pen; therefore Mr. M. cannot with any just pretence, maintain that this is all he means to oppose. The thing which I affirm, and which he denies is, that it is the duty of a bad man to BE a good man. The ground on which this affirmation rests is this, that the thing which God *directly* requires, is THE HEART; and not barely a going about to use certain *means* and *endeavours* in order to make the heart better. If a righteous king confer with a number of his rebellious subjects; the thing that he requires, is, that they BE WILLING to come under his government. If they alledge that their hearts are averse, and they *cannot* obey him, he is never known to direct them to *means* and *endeavours* for changing their hearts. Such a direction would be beneath him; and such an allegation on their part would be looked upon as an open avowal of their rebellious intention, and the conference must immediately break up.

And thus it is in the *scriptures*. The language of the bible is not, “ use such and such means to *get those* dispositions of which you are at present destitute;” but BE YE HOLY, *for I am holy*. BE NOT *wise in your own conceits*—Let that mind BE IN YOU *that was in Christ Jesus*, &c. &c. That which God requires of men is not barely that they use certain *means* in order to bring their hearts to *love, repent, and believe*; he requires the *things themselves*. His language is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God—Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand—While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.*

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The *grounds* on which Mr. M. supports his denial of its being the duty of a bad man to *be* a good man, are such, as, if they prove any thing, will prove that it is not the duty of a villain to *be* an honest man; but barely to make certain *endeavours* towards it, which may, or may not be effectual, as God shall please to bless them. But if such a character were a *debtor* to Mr. M. and were to urge that though he had *endeavoured* to his utmost to become of an honest mind, yet it had not pleased God, at present, to crown his endeavours with success; it is well if he was not treated as *un civilly* as a supposed character of such a kind, is said to have been treated by me. (117, 188.)

If it is alledged, that telling sinners it is their duty to *be* of such a temper of mind, as they must know they are not; and telling them of no means by which they, *without possessing any true desire after it*, may become of such a temper, must needs drive them to *despair* — I answer, *First*, It is impossible, in the nature of things, for any means or directions to be given, which those who have *no direct desire* after a right temper of mind, may use in order to obtain such a temper. The use of a mean always *implies the existence of desire* after the end; and the constitution of our souls must be altered before it can be otherwise. *Second*, It is true that such doctrine as this must drive sinners to *despair*; but it is such despair as must lie at the foundation of all well-grounded hope. It was in this way that *sin revived*, and the apostle *died*. And after all that Mr. M. has said about *grace*, and *divine efficiency*, it is in this way, and not by his compromising notion of *endeavour*, that the sinner must be brought to feel himself utterly lost, absolutely at God's discretion, and in want of a saviour that shall save him, as one may say, in spite of himself.

I am, your's, affectionately,

A. F.

LETTER

LETTER FIFTH.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING in my last considered the subject of divine efficiency, I shall now draw to a close with a few thoughts on Mr. M.'s notion of ENDEAVOUR. If there is any thing in Mr. M.'s performance from which his real sentiments can be gathered, it is this. All the rest is little more than an attempt to demolish. This is the ground on which he has taken his stand. It is not men's duty to *love God*, to *repent of sin*, to *believe in Christ*, to be *perfectly holy*; but to ENDEAVOUR a compliance with these things. It is their duty, it seems, not to *return* to the Lord, but barely to *pray* that they may be able to return—and so on of every internal exercise of religion. (75. 96.) I have already dropped a few occasional hints on this notion; and shall now consider it more particularly. The following observations are offered to consideration—

I. This *endeavour* is supposed to have no certain connection with the thing endeavoured after.—Mr. M. does not mean to say that that endeavour to *love God*, *repent of sin*, and *believe in Christ*, which he grants to be the duty of men, is such as, if exercised, would certainly issue in any of those things. If he did, the difference between us would not be very material. But this would be contrary to the tenor of what he has written, especially to pages 26, 27. According to Mr. M.'s notion, if I understand it, men may endeavour to love God, repent of sin, and believe in Christ, and so perform their whole duty, in that matter, and yet never be able to love him, believe in him, &c. no not in the least degree; and so may die unconverted notwithstanding, and finally perish.

II. *Endeavour* is used by Mr. M. in opposition to *possession*. The thing that he all along opposes, is, that men are obliged to *possess* spiritual dispositions; and this
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is what he substitutes in the place of such possession. (96.) The endeavour, therefore, that he inculcates, must not imply the *possession* of any spiritual disposition whatever; no nor of any *direct inclination*, or *desire* after the things sought. If it did, endeavour would not be properly opposed to possession, for it is absurd that any thing should be opposed to that which is necessarily included in it. And this seems to be the kind of endeavour that Mr. M. pleads for in page 26, where he says "we must pray as in truth we *can*, let our frame or state be what it may"—That is, if we have *no desire* after God in our hearts, we are only to take care that we pretend to none, and in this way we may pray with *integrity* and *uprightness*! But

III. Seeking and endeavouring without the possession of any true desire after the things sought, can be only *indirect*; and therefore can have *no true virtue* in it, but on the contrary is the essence of *hypocrisy*.—A disobedient son may know himself in danger of being disinherited by his father. He may, to avoid this, reform his conduct, conform in appearance to his father's will, and *endeavour* to reconcile his mind to many things which in themselves he cordially hates. But such endeavour as this, few will pretend, has any virtue in it; and yet this is as much as Mr. M.'s notion of *endeavour* makes to be incumbent on men in general. If they are obliged to *seek* after God, to *pray* to him, to *strive* to enter in at the strait gate; yet they are not in all or any of these exercises obliged to *possess* any true desire after God, or the things for which they seek, for that would be the same as being obliged to possess spiritual dispositions. Mr. M.'s *endeavours*, therefore, are destitute of all true virtue; have nothing in them truly good, or acceptable to God; on the contrary, they are abominable in his sight, as containing the very essence of *hypocrisy*.

I can hardly persuade myself that Mr. M. really means to plead for such endeavours as these, though his account of the matter taken altogether, can agree to no other. He would not wish, however, I dare say, to be an

an advocate for any other than *sincere* endeavours, that is, such a seeking and endeavouring as imply a sincere *desire* after the things sought for. Such *desire* he represents the supposed son of a deist, in his endeavours, to possess. (26.) But if this is what he pleads for, then all the ends to be answered by it are lost; for he is then but just upon the same ground as his neighbours. If it is the duty of every man sincerely to endeavour to repent of sin, and believe in Christ, then it is his duty to *possess a sincere desire* to repent and believe; but that amounts to the same thing as its being his duty to possess spiritual dispositions. Mr. M. also, in pleading for this as the duty of men, pleads just as his opponent does, for that which “never existed, nor ever will.” (120.)* Neither can he tell us of any *means*, which those who have *no desire* to repent and believe, may use in order to get such a desire; so that his reader is just as much perplexed as he supposes mine to be. (17.) Such a *desire* also is a *blessing* as well as a duty. By the supposition it is the *latter*, and yet wherever it exists it is the *former*. It is wrought by divine efficiency; it is the effect of being created anew in Christ Jesus, and stands connected with eternal life. And here Mr. M.’s unmeaning questions, (pages 24, 25,) might be retorted upon him—“Which must *take the lead*, the *blessing*, or the *duty* ?”——What he says, likewise, of my making it men’s duty to be the *authors* of spiritual dispositions, (202) falls equally upon himself. If it is men’s duty *sincerely to endeavour*, then it is their duty to *have sincere desire*; but this amounts to as much as I have asserted, and may as well be called, a making it the duty of men to be the *authors* of such desire, as any thing I have written can be called a making it their duty to be the *authors* of spiritual dispositions.—Thus, Mr. M.’s notion of *endeavour*, either obliges men to be *hypocrites*, or places him in the same situation as those he censures, and answers the substance of his own objections.

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Mr.

* “A freedom from condemnation, sinners want to obtain; but a life of faith in Christ, and holiness *from* Christ, they do not so much as *desire* to enjoy; nor *ever will* until the Lord takes away the heart of stone, and graciously bestows an heart of flesh.”—Mr. Martin’s sermon on Rom. x. 3. p. 32.

Mr. M.'s own ideas of the matter, however, are widely different. He seems to have such an opinion of this notion, as to reckon it almost a sufficient ground for anticipating the issue of the contest, and enjoying beforehand the pleasure of a mental triumph. He requires "Mr. Fuller to shew what it is that men are obliged to that is absolutely different from *endeavour*, and yet short of acting *efficiently*. Till this be done," he adds, in a style peculiar to himself, "he may write, but it is supposed he can never write an *answer* to the governing propositions of this performance!" (154.)

Truly I do not know that I have any material objection to comprehending the whole of human duty in *endeavour*, though not as explained by Mr. MARTIN. There is as much included in the word as I have ever pleaded for. *First*, Endeavour includes the utmost exertion of all our natural powers; but the utmost exertion of all our powers towards spiritual objects, *is* spiritual exercise. Such *endeavour* as this, to love, repent, and believe, (if it is proper to speak of such exercises as the objects of endeavour) can never be in vain, because therein it is that *the things themselves consist*. The exertion or outgoing of the will and affections is the same thing as *choosing*, and *loving*. *Seeking after God*, and such like expressions, are always descriptive of *spiritual exercise*, of such exercise as is connected with eternal life.* *Secondly*, Endeavour to perform spiritual actions, and to obtain spiritual blessings, instead of being opposed to the *possession of spiritual disposition*, necessarily *implies* it. It is impossible in the nature of things, that we should directly and truly endeavour after that towards which we possess no real *desire*. No man ever yet *sought* after God, or *endeavoured* to please him, without *possessing* a love to him, and desire after him. Thus, the whole of what I plead for is included in Mr. M.'s favourite word ENDEAVOUR.

Mr. M. before he has done, gives us to understand, that let the worst come to the worst, he is not without his resources of comfort. Suppose, for instance, it should prove

* See my Reply to Mr. Button, p. 72--74.

prove that he is as *inconsistent* as he has attempted to prove his AUTHOR; even *that*, he thinks, will prove one point which he has long laboured to establish; namely, "*the weakness of the human understanding.*" (95.) That is, it will prove the weakness of Mr. MARTIN's understanding. But possibly that may never have yet been called in question; or if it have, and if after "long labour," he may be supposed by this time to have put the matter out of all doubt; still it may not follow that because his understanding is weak, therefore every one's else must needs be the same.

Seriously, was ever any question made of the weakness of the human understanding? Was it ever denied that our natural faculties are impaired, as well as our bodies subjected to disease, by the fall? True, it has been, and is supposed, that let our natural faculties be impaired as they may, it is not our fault that we do not understand beyond their present extent, any more than it is the fault of a man born blind, not to read his bible. But the chief of what I have written upon the human understanding, respects not its natural but moral weakness; and has this ever been denied? Has it not all along been maintained that men are *blinded by prejudice*; and that even good men are infected with a sad degree of the same disease? And how if it should prove that Mr. M.'s mind is tinctured with such a degree of *prejudice* in favour of his own ways of thinking, as that he has involved himself in far greater *inconsistencies* than those which he thinks he has discovered in the author whom he has censured? Will this affect any argument in debate between us? I appeal to you, Sir, and to all "competent judges," whether Mr. M.'s understanding must not be *weak* indeed, if he think it will.

But suppose Mr. M. instead of gaining, should lose the *prize* for which he is become a COMPETITOR; still he comforts himself that his ALL will not be lost. He has a stock of respectability that will yet be unexhausted. He does not mean, therefore, at any rate, to indulge *despair*. So well established is his respectability that even
" Mr.

"Mr. Fuller, he thinks, cannot hesitate to say that he is above contempt." (208.) Mr. M. I observe, though in general fond of *self-applause*, yet here appears hardly contented with it: he wishes, it seems, to know his AUTHOR'S opinion concerning him; but, not having patience to wait for it, he ventures to anticipate the matter, and decide it himself.—Had Mr. M. but given me leave to speak for myself, I cannot tell how much I might have said in his praise; as it is, I can only say that if I could have access to him, I would whisper in his ear these lines of Dr. Young:—

"Fame is a bubble the reserv'd enjoy,
Who strive to grasp it, as they touch, destroy;
'Tis the world's debt, to deeds of high degree;
But if you pay *yourself*, the world is free."

Seriously, Is not Mr. M. ashamed? If he is not, must not his best friends be ashamed for him? and not only ashamed but grieved for the idea he gives the world of the motives of those who are engaged in what he calls a "serious altercation?"

I remain affectionately your's,

A. FULLER.

ERRATA. Page 14. line 18. *for learning read language.*
p. 16. l. 19. *for 113 read 133.*

N.B. A Reply to Mr. TAYLOR'S XIII Letters
will shortly be published.

POSTSCRIPT.

You ask what I think of Mr. MARTIN's treatment of Mr. EVANS, particularly "whether his gross misrepresentation of his meaning, page 70, is to be attributed to *ignorance* or *malevolence*?"

I think his treatment of Mr. EVANS is of a piece with his treatment of others. Mr. M. seems to be so intoxicated with ideas of his *own* "reputation," as to be incapable of respecting the character of other men. Few people who may read the 69th, 70th, and 71st pages of his book, will think he discovers much of the *Christian* or the *Gentleman*; some may suppose, however, that he has shewn himself the *Man*, particularly by his daring manner of speaking concerning Mr. EVANS's resentment. If manliness consisted in the swell of self-importance, or the bold dashes of insolence, Mr. MARTIN might well be entitled to that quality; but the boldest attempts to provoke another's resentment are not always the strongest indications of manly courage. There are cases which are *beneath* resentment; cases in which the assailant himself cannot have the vanity to expect it. I do suppose Mr. Martin never expected that Mr. Evans would take any notice of what he has written; and this might probably inspire him with courage to write as he did.

As to the passage in page 70, I think a very small share of candour and common sense would have construed Mr. EVANS's words as meaning no more than that men in general have the command of all the members of the body, and *the use* of all the faculties of the soul. *Ignorance* and *malevolence*, however, are hard words, especially the latter; your "knowledge of Mr. MARTIN's character," you say, makes you hope it was the former.

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For my part, I think it is very well that Mr. MARTIN has informed us (p. 70) that he is not under the influence of ENVY, for I confess I should otherwise have imputed his treatment of Mr. EVANS to *that* cause; and even as it is, I know not upon what other principle to account for his harping upon the subject of "emolument."



4 OCT 58

